

Endorsement Clinical Interview Guidelines

Per the revised endorsement policy, the Endorsing Agency will complete a clinical interview with provider agency staff. The Endorsing Agency is required to interview only those staff who are hired to meet the staffing requirements of the service being endorsed unless otherwise noted in the standardized endorsement check sheet and instructions. For example, if the provider is seeking endorsement for Day Treatment and intends to serve a total of 18 consumers per the program description, the staff interviewed will be the full time Program Director; 1 QP for every 6 consumers to be served by the program (a total of 3); one additional QP, AP or PP; and a Licensed Professional (0.5 FTE). Each of these staff members' qualifications for the position must be supported by documented evidence made available to the Endorsing Agency staff by the provider. As indicated in the endorsement policy, the interview shall be completed by licensed clinicians (as defined in 10A NCAC 27G.0104) of the Endorsing Agency. An MD or PhD shall be present if the provider representative is an MD or PhD. If the program description identifies that there will be ancillary or additional staff beyond the requirements of the service definition, those staff members do not need to be interviewed.

The provider agency's staff will be interviewed as a group by the two licensed clinicians of the Endorsing Agency. One staff be as lead and coordinate introductions, provide an overview of the clinical interview process and provide a closing statement as to the next step in the endorsement process.

The two licensed clinicians of the Endorsing Agency shall take turns asking the identified provider agency staff questions from the standardized DMH/DD/SAS clinical interview check sheet attached to the endorsement policy. The two staff may ask follow up questions only to clarify a response made by the provider agency staff. The provider agency staff shall have the opportunity to answer each question listed on the standardized DMH/DD/SAS clinical interview check sheet.

In order to ensure that the provider agency staff has had ample time to respond to each question, the Endorsing Agency staff shall ask the provider agency staff if they have completed answering the question prior to asking the next question. Although one individual may take the lead on answering a specific question, the Endorsing Agency staff may offer the other provider agency staff an opportunity to add to the initial respondent's answer. The provider agency staff shall be given the list of the standardized questions to refer to during the interview. The list of questions shall be returned to the Endorsing Agency at the conclusion of the interview.

It is crucial for all Endorsing Agency staff performing clinical interviews to have the same understanding of the expectations for the responses to the questions listed on the standardized clinical interview check sheet prior to beginning the interview. The Endorsing Agency staff shall determine the criteria for a "full", "partial", or "no/incorrect" rating based on the following guidance:

- If the answer delivered by the interviewee demonstrates a clear understanding of the issues addressed in the question(s), the rating is considered a "full" rating.

- If the interviewee demonstrates only a superficial level of understanding of the issues addressed in the question(s) and/or the response does not include essential elements as expected by the Endorsing Agency, the rating is considered a “partial” rating.
- If the interviewee fails to answer the question, provides an incorrect answer or provides an answer of “I don’t know”, the rating is considered a “no answer/incorrect” rating.

During the clinical interview, the two licensed clinicians of the Endorsing Agency that complete the group interview shall record their preliminary rating of the provider agency’s staff member’s response to each question on the standardized DMH/DD/SAS clinical interview check sheet. Results of the clinical interview should not be shared with the provider agency staff at this time.

The two licensed clinicians of the Endorsing Agency that completed the interview shall meet and make a determination of a final rating for the provider agency’s staff member’s response to each question. In the event it is determined that the provider agency staff gave a “partial” or “no/incorrect” answer to any question, the Endorsing Agency shall clearly document the reason the provider agency staff’s response was not considered a “full or complete” answer. After the final ratings are determined for each question, the two licensed clinicians of the Endorsing Agency involved in the clinical interview shall make a final determination as to whether the provider successfully “meets” or “does not meet” the overall clinical interview. Eighty percent of the questions must be rated “met” or “partially met” in order for the provider to successfully “meet” the overall clinical interview.

The standardized DMH/DD/SAS clinical interview check sheet with documented final ratings and the overall clinical interview criteria rating, “met” or “not met” for the clinical interview are to be filled out completely by the interviewers and attached to the endorsement check sheet. The Endorsing Agency may expand the blocks on the check sheet or attach continuation sheets for comments when there is not sufficient room to document in the boxes provided on the clinical interview check sheet. It is important that comments be objective and factual. It is recommended that the Endorsing Agency thoughtfully develop clear written policies and procedures which are consistent with the DMH/DD/SAS Endorsement Policy and train their licensed clinicians on the clinical interview process. Policies and procedures should be applied consistently across providers.